

VZCZCXRO7481  
PP RUEHROV  
DE RUEHKH #2493 2851615  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 121615Z OCT 06  
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4929  
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 002493

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SPECIAL ENVOY NATSIOS AND AF/SPG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/11/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SU](#) [AU](#) [UN](#)

SUBJECT: ABDULWAHID ALONE; FUR LOOKING FOR ALTERNATIVES TO  
SLA

REF: A. KHARTOUM 1539

[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 1460

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Cameron Hume; Reason: 1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Support for SLM/A leader Abdulwahid Nur has eroded so much in the five months since he refused to sign the Darfur Peace Agreement that his own family no longer backs his leadership, prominent Fur National Assembly member Abdulgassem Seif al-Din told Poloffs on October 11. "First he lost Minni Minawi, then he lost the G-19, and now he's lost Mohammed Abdulshafie, who used to be his best friend. He has no one." Even Abdulgassem -- a longtime friend of Abdulwahid's father, and until recently, Abdulwahid's own father-in-law -- has lost faith in Abdulwahid's ability to lead. Despite Abdulwahid's late September declaration that he would join the DPA if provisions were added on disarmament and wealth sharing, Abdulgassem doubted that Abdulwahid would ever sign the agreement. "He's not reasonable. If he can't be Vice President, he just wants to stay in Asmara, drink beer, and talk to his commanders on the telephone."

[1](#)2. (C) Abdulgassem himself returned from Asmara only a few days ago. He went to Eritrea in July to convince Abdulwahid to sign the DPA (Ref A), and planned to stay only a week; he later decided he had to stay longer, to help reconcile Abdulwahid and Abdulshafie. In the end, he admits, he failed on both counts, and was ready to return to Khartoum in late September -- only to be detained for two days by Eritrean police. Abdulgassem does not understand why authorities stopped him from returning; they told him only that they were acting on orders. Abdulgassem believes Eritrea's best interests lie in convincing non-signatories to join the DPA, because Eritrea needs better relations with Sudan. But he also acknowledges that Eritrea's continued willingness to host Nur and Shafie may have made it harder to bring them into the peace process.

[1](#)3. (C) Abdulgassem confessed to also be disillusioned with the SLM as a "top down" movement. "It has completely splintered between different leaders," he said, and has no support across tribal or clan lines. A SLA leadership conference would likely fail, because "there was no consensus among the leaders that there needed to be consensus." He now believes Darfuri civil society leaders must create a new political movement from the "bottom up," starting with the Fur, and then reaching out to other African and Arab tribes. A loose group of Fur leaders in Nyala, headed by former South Darfur Minister of Health Dr. Mohamed Ahmed (Ref B), are already working to form such a movement; a similar effort is underway in El Fasher, he said. Abdulgassem hopes to visit both in coming weeks, and help them establish an organizational structure.

HUME